

"Flourish for the future"



**ST. MARY'S
CHURCH OF ENGLAND
PRIMARY SCHOOL, WELHAM GREEN**

Equality Policy

Date: July 2025

Review: July 2029

Headteacher – Mr. A. D. Petty

Chair of Governors – Mr. C. Diver

We are a welcoming Christian community where every child has the chance to flourish. We bring and share joy, inspire daily and creatively equip children for the future. We're thankful for all that God has provide; proud of where He has placed us; and excited about the potential to come.

St. Mary's CofE Primary School wants to be recognised as a school at the heart of the community, providing an inclusive, safe, caring environment in which pupils can learn and flourish.

Equality is at the core of our vision and values at St. Mary's CofE Primary School. We believe that all members of the school community, including pupils, parents, staff, governors and other community members are entitled to be treated with respect and appreciation for the contributions that they make to the school. With that entitlement, comes the responsibility to treat others with the same degree of respect and appreciation. All members of our community are expected to take seriously their entitlements as well as their responsibilities in this regard. We work together by taking pride in our uniqueness as individuals and by enjoying and celebrating the differences of others.

As a school we welcome our duties under the Equality Act 2010. The general duties are to:-

- **Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation** and other conduct prohibited by the Act
- **Advance equality of opportunity** between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not
- **Foster good relations** between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not

The Act introduced a single Public Sector Equality Duty [PSED], which came into force in April 2011, replacing the separate duties on race, disability and gender. The PSED, sometimes referred to as the 'general duty', extends schools' equality duties to all protected characteristics:

- Race
- Disability
- Age
- Sex
- Religion or belief
- Sexual orientation
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and Civil Partnership

1: Vision and Values

Our vision statement - "Flourish for the future"

At the heart of our vision lies the child. All children are unique, special and different and need to be treated as such. This Equality Policy outlines the commitment of the staff, pupils and governors of St. Mary's CofE Primary School to ensure that equality of opportunity is available to all members of the school community. For our school this means not simply treating everybody the same but understanding and tackling the different barriers which could lead to unequal outcomes for different groups of pupils in school, whilst celebrating and valuing the achievements and strengths of all members of the school community. These include:

- Pupils
- Staff

- Parents/carers
- The governing body
- Multi-agency staff linked to the school
- Visitors to the school
- Students on placement

We believe that equality at our school should permeate all aspects of school life and is the responsibility of every member of the school and wider community. Every member of the school community should feel safe, secure, valued and of equal worth.

At St. Mary's CofE Primary School, equality is a key principle for treating all people fairly and creating a society in which everyone has the opportunity to fulfil their potential – irrespective of their gender, ethnicity, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, age or any other recognised area of discrimination.

School Aims

- To encourage the children to value themselves and to respect the beliefs, needs and feelings of others.
- To inspire children to think independently, to be positive in their outlook and to communicate well.
- To provide a safe and caring environment where achievements are celebrated and a sense of pride is encouraged.
- To develop in the children an appreciation of the beauty and wonder of God's world.
- To provide a relevant curriculum for all children to help them develop their full academic potential.
- To foster in the children a sense of belonging to their local community and to widen their sense of responsibility in society.

In fulfilling the legal obligations in Section 3, we are guided by the following principles;

Principle 1: All learners are of equal value.

We see all learners and potential learners and their parents and carers, as of equal value

- Whether or not they are disabled
- Whatever their ethnicity, culture, national origin or national status
- Whatever their gender
- Whatever their religious or non religious affiliation or faith background
- Whatever their sexual identity

Principle 2: We recognise and respect difference

Treating people equally (Principle 1 above) does not necessarily involve treating them all the same. Our policies, procedures and activities must not discriminate but must nevertheless take account of differences of life-experience, outlook and background and in the kinds of barrier and disadvantage which people may face, in relation to:

- Disability, so that reasonable adjustments are made
- Ethnicity, so that different cultural backgrounds and experiences of prejudice are recognised

- Gender, so that the different needs and experiences of girls and boys, women and men, are recognised
- Religion, belief or faith background
- Sexual identity

Principle 3: We aim to foster positive attitudes and relationships, and a shared sense of cohesion and belonging

We intend that our policies, procedures and activities should promote:

- Positive attitudes towards disabled people, good relations between disabled and non-disabled people, and an absence of harassment of disabled people
- Positive interaction, good relations and dialogue between groups and communities different from each other in terms of ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation, national origin or national status and an absence of prejudice-related bullying and incidents
- Mutual respect and good relations between boys and girls and women and men, and an absence of sexual and homophobic harassment.

Principle 4: We aim to observe good equalities practice in staff recruitment, retention and development

We ensure that policies and procedures should benefit all employees and potential employees, for example in recruitment and promotion and in continuing professional development.

- Whether or not they are disabled
- Whatever their ethnicity, culture, religious affiliation, national origin or national status
- Whatever their gender and sexual identity and with full respect for legal rights relating to pregnancy and maternity.

Principle 5: We aim to reduce and remove inequalities and barriers that already exist

In addition to avoiding or minimising possible negative impacts of our policies, we take opportunities to maximise positive impacts by reducing and removing inequalities and barriers that may already exist between:

- Disabled and non-disabled people
- People of different ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds
- Girls and boys, women and men

Principle 6: We aim to consult and involve widely

We aim to engage with others to ensure that those who are affected by a policy or activity are consulted and involved in the design of new policies and in the review of existing ones. Where appropriate we will consult and involve:

- Disabled people as well as non-disabled
- People from a range of ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds
- Both women and men, girls and boys
- People of any sexual orientation

Principle 7: Benefits

We intend that our policies and activities should benefit society as a whole, both locally and nationally, by fostering greater social cohesion and greater participation in public life of:

- Disabled people as well as non-disabled
- People from a range of ethnic, cultural and religious backgrounds
- Both women and men, girls and boys
- People of any sexual orientation

2: School Context

The characteristics of our school

A brief description of our school and its community setting

St. Mary's CofE Primary School is a Church of England Voluntary Aided school, situated in Welham Green, catering for children from 4-11 years of age. We aim to provide an environment which enables each child to develop academically, spiritually, socially and physically to the fullest extent possible. Our school is caring and safe. All members of our school community are made to feel welcome, valued and respected.

Welham Green is a large village situated near Hatfield and in easy reach of the M25, St. Albans, Welwyn Garden City and by train to London. There is a variety of housing, both council and private.

3: Legal Background

The duties that underpin our scheme-

Our school is committed to meeting its public sector statutory duties as outlined previously. We understand that the duties apply to service delivery and employment and staff management as well as policy development and implementation.

At St. Mary's CofE Primary School we implement accessibility plans which are aimed at:

- Increasing the extent to which disabled pupils can participate in the curriculum;
- Improving the physical environment of the school to enable disabled pupils to take better advantage of education, benefits, facilities and services provided;
- Improving the availability of accessible information to disabled pupils.

4: Roles and Responsibilities

School Community

Governing Body

Responsibility

Involving and engaging the whole school community in identifying and understanding equality barriers and in the setting of objectives to address these.

Monitoring progress towards achieving equality objectives. Publishing data and publishing equality objectives. Ensuring that staff have access to appropriate training and resources.

Headteacher

As above including:

Promoting key messages to staff, parents and pupils about equality and what is expected of them and can be expected from the school in carrying out its day to day duties. Ensuring that all of the school community receives adequate training to meet the need of delivering equality, including pupil awareness. Ensure that all staff are aware of their responsibility to record report, and respond appropriately to prejudice related incidents.

Senior Leadership Team

To support the Headteacher as above
Ensure fair treatment and access to services and opportunities. Ensure that all staff are aware of their responsibility to record, report and respond appropriately to prejudice related incidents.

Teaching Staff	<p>Help in delivering the right outcomes for pupils. Uphold the commitment made to pupils and parents/carers on how they can be expected to be treated. Design and deliver an inclusive curriculum. Ensure that you are aware of your responsibility to record, report and respond appropriately to prejudice related incidents.</p>
Non-Teaching Staff	<p>Support the school and the governing body in delivering a fair and equitable service to all stakeholders. Uphold the commitment made by the headteacher on how pupils and parents/carers can be expected to be treated. Support colleagues within the school community. Ensure that you are aware of your responsibility to record, report and respond appropriately to prejudice related incidents.</p>
Parents/Carers	<p>Take an active part in identifying barriers for the school community and in informing the governing body of actions that can be taken to eradicate these. Take an active role in supporting and challenging the school to achieve the commitment given to the school community in tackling inequality and achieving equality of opportunity for all.</p>
Pupils	<p>Supporting the school to achieve the commitment made to tackling inequality. Uphold the commitment made by the headteacher on how pupils and parents/carers, staff and the wider school community can be expected to be treated.</p>
Local Community Members	<p>Take an active part in identifying barriers for the school community and in informing the governing body of actions that can be taken to eradicate these Take an active role in supporting and challenging the school to achieve the commitment made to the school community in tackling inequality and achieving equality of opportunity for all.</p>

Staffing and Staff Development

We recognise the need for positive role models and distribution of responsibility among staff.

- This should include pupils' access to a balance of male and female staff at all key stages where possible.
- We encourage the career development and aspirations of all school staff
- It is our policy to provide staff with training and development, which will increase awareness of the needs of different groups of pupils.
- Access to opportunities for professional development is monitored on equality grounds.

Staff Recruitment

- All those involved in recruitment and selection are aware of what they should do to avoid discrimination and ensure equality good practice through the recruitment and selection process.
- Equalities policies and practices are covered in all staff inductions.
- All temporary staff are made aware of policies and practices. This does not include volunteers.
- Employment policy and procedures reviewed regularly to check conformity with legislation and impact.

Voluntary Aided Schools

Voluntary Aided schools may apply religious criteria when recruiting or dismissing any member of their teaching staff. In recruitment, remuneration and promotion they may give preferences to persons:

- Whose religious opinions are in accordance with the tenets of the religion of the school;
- Who attend religious worship in accordance with those tenets; or
- Who give, or are willing to give, religious education in accordance with those tenets.

In considering dismissals, the governing body may have regard to any conduct that is incompatible with the precepts, or with the upholding of the tenets, of the religion of the school. A teacher appointed to teach RE may be dismissed by the governing body without the consent of the local authority if he or she fails to give such education efficiently and suitably.

Non-teaching staff

Religious criteria may not be applied to any other posts in a VA school unless there is a genuine occupational requirement. This would need to be justified but might, for example, apply to a member of staff required to give pastoral care to pupils.

We will ensure that the community has access to our Equality Policy and our published equality information and objectives by publishing them on the school website.

Developing Best Practice

Learning and Teaching

We aim to provide all our pupils with the opportunity to succeed, and to reach the highest level of personal achievement. To do this, teaching and learning will:

- Provide equality of access for all pupils and prepare them for life in a diverse society
- Use materials that reflect a range of cultural backgrounds, without stereotyping
- Use materials to promote a positive image of and attitude towards disability and disabled people
- Promote attitudes and values that will challenge discriminatory behaviour
- Provide opportunities for pupils to appreciate their own culture and religion and celebrate the diversity of other cultures
- Use a range of sensitive teaching strategies when teaching about different cultural and religious traditions
- Develop pupils' advocacy skills so that they can detect bias, challenge discrimination, leading to justice and equality
- Ensure that the whole curriculum covers issues of equality and diversity
- All subject leaders, where appropriate, promote and celebrate the contribution of different cultures to the subject matter
- Seek to involve all parents in supporting their child's education
- Provide educational visits and extended learning opportunities that involve all pupil groups
- Take account of the performance of all pupils when planning for future learning and setting challenging targets
- Make best use of all available resources to support the learning of all groups of pupils
- Identify resources and training that support staff development

Learning Environment

There is a consistently high expectation of all pupils regardless of their gender, ethnicity, disability, religion of belief, sexual orientation, age or any other recognised area of discrimination. All pupils are encouraged to improve on their own achievements and not to measure themselves against others.

Parents are also encouraged to view their own children's achievements in this light. Teacher enthusiasm is a vital factor in achieving a high level of motivation and good results from all pupils. Adults in the school will provide good, positive role models in their approach to all issues relating to equality of opportunity.

The school places a very high priority on the provision for special educational needs and disability. We will aim to meet all pupils' learning needs including the more able by carefully assessed and administered programmes of work.

The school provides an environment in which all pupils have equal access to facilities and resources.

All pupils are encouraged to be actively involved in their own learning.

A range of teaching methods are used throughout the school to ensure that effective learning takes place at all stages for all pupils.

Consideration will be given to the physical learning environment -both internal and external, including displays and signage.

5: Engagement

It is a requirement that the development of this plan and the actions within it have been informed by the input of staff, pupils and parents and carers. We have achieved this by using the following to shape the plan:

- Children are encouraged to express their views during PSHE lessons and Circle Time and through regular surveys including an Annual Pupil Questionnaire.
- The school hears the 'pupil voice' through the School Council.
- The school actively seeks staff views and listens to staff concerns, for example through Team and Staff Meetings.
- The school seeks the views of parents through parent/teacher consultations, newsletters and surveys including Parent Questionnaires.
- The school encourages, enables and hears the full range of views including those with disabilities by taking the advice of the Local Authority.
- Issues raised in annual pupil progress meetings.
- Feedback at Governing Body meetings.

6: Using information - Monitoring and review

Every four years, we will review our objectives in relation to any changes in our school profile. Our objectives will sit in our overall school improvement plan and therefore be reviewed as part of this process.

St. Mary's CofE Primary School is an inclusive school, working towards greater equality in the whole school community. We use the curriculum and teaching to enhance the self-esteem of all those we serve and aim to provide a learning environment in which each individual is encouraged to fulfil their potential.

We collect and analyse a range of equality information for our pupils. We make regular assessments of pupils' learning and use this information to track pupils' progress as they move

through the school. As part of this process, we regularly monitor the performance of different groups to ensure that all groups of pupils are making the best possible progress. We use this information to adjust future teaching and learning plans as necessary.

Resources are available to support groups of pupils where the information suggests that progress is not as good as it should be. The governing body receives regular updates on pupil performance information.

School performance information is compared to national data and local authority data to ensure that pupils are making appropriate progress when compared to all schools and to schools in similar circumstances.

As well as monitoring pupil performance information, we also monitor a range of other information. This relates to:

- Attendance
- Behaviour incidents
- Exclusions
- Racism
- Bullying
- Parental involvement
- Participation in extended learning opportunities

Our monitoring activities enable us to identify any differences in pupil performance and provide specific support as required, including pastoral support. This allows us to take appropriate action to meet the needs of specific groups in order to make the necessary improvements.

St. Mary's CofE Primary School is also committed to providing a working environment free from discrimination, bullying, harassment and victimisation. We aim to recruit an appropriately qualified workforce and adhere to recruitment and selection procedures which are fair, equitable and in line with statutory duties and Hertfordshire Authority's recruitment guidelines. We also aim at establishing a governing body that is representative of all sections of the community in order to respect and respond to the diverse needs of our population.

The Equality Act and the 'Public Sector Equality Duty' that derives from it, require the school to keep and monitor data in order for trends and potential areas of inequality to be identified.

- The school has data on its composition, broken down by year group, ethnicity, gender and English as an additional language and other vulnerable groups as identified by data analysis
- The school has data on its composition broken down by special educational need.
- The school uses this data to identify inequalities of outcome and participation. This then informs objective setting for achievable and measurable improvements.

The school has identified the following issues that may be barriers to effective learning and successful working at the school:

- Low self-esteem, low expectations and other peer group pressure
- Experience of bullying, harassment or social exclusion
- Low income leading to difficulty in participating in some aspects of school life and no adequate home study space
- Low parental support or different parental expectations
- Frequent moves and lack of stability in life leading to time out of school or low attendance

- Lack of help with emotional, mental and physical well-being and poor behaviour including exclusions
- Language difficulties
- Special Educational Needs
- Lack of physical access to school facilities or services
- Inappropriate curriculum
- Recruitment, management and development of staff and governors.

APPENDIX

St Mary's Diversity poster

